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Abstract

The repcrt describes an evaluaticnal study of a series of 8 televisicn programs fcr in-service training cf teachers cf Mexican-American children with language difficulties. Three groups of teachers (2 experimental grcups and 1 ccntrol grcup) and their classrocm students participated in the evaluaticn. One of the experimental grcups was given discussicn leadership after each televisicn lessen and the cther grcup viewed the lessen withcut discussion. The control group did not view the television series. Ccnclusicns were that teachers in bcth experimental grcups scored significantly higher than the ccntrcl grcup cn a written test abcut language difficulties cf Mexican-American children. However, differences in student perfcrmance between the 3 groups were nct significant. The teacher test correspcnding to the television series and a list cf related materials are appended. (IL)

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REPORT TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION.....

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MEXICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATION RESEARCH PROGRAM:

SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS

RC 003828

SANTA CLARA COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION
Dr. Glenn W. Hoffmann, Superintendent.....
70 West Hedding Street
San Jose, California 95110

1969

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REPORT TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION --MEXICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM "SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS"

The past few decades have seen a major increase in California's Mexican-American population. Classrooms are crowded with children from Spanish-speaking backgrounds, children whose first encounter with the English language may not come until they start school. Somehow, they must be taught to understand, speak and read this second language--and, if possible, to do so without the accent that would brand them as "different" from their peers.

During the years following World War II, educators in California had grown increasingly troubled about the pressures being placed on their schools by the tremendous influx of children from migrant and immigrant families. Efforts of individual teachers and isolated districts to cope with the linguistic turmoil thus generated were seldom more than a finger in the dike; they made little headway toward solving the overall dilemma. By the 1960's it had become clear that no one agency could competently overcome a problem of such magnitude. Thus, the words "coordination" and "teamwork" took on greater meaning than ever before.

Cooperation of Agencies

A milestone was reached when, in 1968, four deeply concerned persons met in Sacramento to determine what could be done in an effective way to meet this need. These educators were Dr. Eugene Gonzales, Associate Superintendent, Chief, Division of Instruction of the California State Department of Education, Mr. John Plakos, who directs the Mexican-American Educational Research Program, California State Department of Education, Dr. Glenn W. Hoffmann, Superintendent of Schools, Santa Clara County, and Miss Viola M. Owen, Director of Curriculum for Santa Clara County.

From their discussions came the realization that immediate steps had to be taken if the quandary confronting California's teachers was to be resolved within the foreseeable future. But could this prodigious task really be accomplished? The group meeting in the State capitol were firmly convinced that it could. Through the medium of television, and by utilizing the methods of linguistics pioneer Leonard Olguin, they have already taken a giant step forward in proving their point.

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Solutions in Communications

SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS is a series of eight TV programs providing knowledge and skills for teachers working with Mexican-American children experiencing language difficulties. It was developed jointly by the Mexican-American Research Project and the Santa Clara County Office of Education, with the cooperation of Fresno and San Diego Counties, California State Department of Education, under the production supervision of KTEH/Channel 54. The insights and skills presented in this series come from Mr. Olguin's personal experience, teaching experience, and statewide research for the Department of Education. The programs are based on the following premise:

> Much of a child's formal education is acquired through reading. Writing is an abstract form of talking; reading is an abstract form of hearing and understanding what is "heard" through the eyes. But a child cannot read what he cannot hear. The auditory discrimination and speaking habits of Spanish--mouth muscles, tone, word order, and breath control--impede these youngsters' acquisition of the English language. Nevertheless, these limitations or impediments are identifiable, predictable, testable, and therefore vulnerable to skillful teaching.

During the Fall of 1968, these eight TV programs were presented to the viewers of Santa Clara County. Bi-weekly scheduling at an early after-school hour allowed a maximum number of teachers to view the series. Much of the material used on the programs was drawn from Mr. Olguin's book, Shuck Loves Chirley. Specific trouble spots, as indicated by some of the program titles--"An Introduction to Schwa", "Thirty Demons", "The Troubles With 'S'", "The Air Bubble", and "The Difficult 'th' Sound"--were given close attention, and precise remedies were demonstrated for alleviation of the problems.

A viewer's study guide was developed to accompany the series. Each of the eight sections of the booklet summarized one of the programs. Included among the drills, tests, and concise examples were a number of funny stories and poems: "Tugs", "A Little Crab", and "When I Go Fishing". Although the humor in these works is obvious, Mr. Olguin admits that a serious motive prompted their inclusion: they are all potential "accent erasers".

The first seven programs adhered to a definite format. They began with a motivating question which introduced the day's exercise, then moved on to the lesson itself. After a brief explanatory lecture, Mr. Olguin held a work session with his class of TV students. Discussion questions were then presented for the audience of teachers to debate and analyze. Each program closed with a "Try This In Your Classroom" suggestion which pinpointed some drill or exercise for the elimination of a particular trouble spot. The eighth program reviewed the entire series, and eleven basic ideas were underlined to aid teachers in implanting the sounds of English into the Spanish-speaking child.

Teacher Reaction to the Series

A total of 121 teachers participated in the end-of-course conference and workshop. In responding to a questionnaire presented at the workshop, these teachers enthusiastically endorsed the series. A few typical responses are summarized here:

a. The entire group declared that the course had helped them to identify language problems of their Spanish-language background students.

b. A great many agreed that the course had been valuable in helping them learn to listen to what their students were really saying; numerous others now had a clearer understanding of the environmental and cultural factors which influenced their Spanish-speaking students, and a majority of them expressed gratitude for the concrete teaching suggestions and specific practice materials and techniques illustrated by the series.

c. Even in the short time during which they had been implementing the materials and techniques in their classrooms, over four-fifths of the teachers responding felt that their students had improved in language skills as a result of SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS.

Statewide Promulgation

The State Department of Education has recently declared that this series of programs and the materials designed to complement the TV presentations are of such value that they should be widely disseminated. Accordingly, a conference was held in Los Angeles on February 20, 1969, at which time kinescopes of the programs and copies of both the viewer's study guide and teacher evaluation instrument were distributed to educators from the thirty California counties having a Mexican-American population of five percent or greater. Counties having a less crucial need for such teaching aids had an opportunity to either borrow or buy these materials at a minimum cost for use in their own areas.

The wisdom of this generous move on the part of the State Department of Education is emphasized when one considers the high mobility of California's Mexican-American population. Teachers throughout the state will soon have the benefit of this unique educational tool. Because of this a child whose family moves often, through necessity, will profit from his teacher's increased perception and training whether he lives in San Diego or San Jose, in Salinas or Marysville.

An Evaluation of Teacher and Student Learning [1]

A research project utilizing two experimental groups and one control group was carried out in coordination with the TV programming. Although the full benefit of SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS may not be realized for many months yet, the early findings indicate extremely encouraging results.

The experiment described below is an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS. Teachers in two districts with a significant Mexican-American population in Santa Clara County enrolled in the course for in-service credit from their district or from the University of Santa Clara, which offered two units of college credit to teachers. Second, third, and fourth grade students were intended to be the beneficiaries of the training given their teachers in the TV programs.

There were two hypotheses tested in this evaluation:

1. Teachers who receive in-service lessons in Mexican-American pronunciation difficulties will be better able to recognize these difficulties and to offer remedial help than will teachers who have not seen the televised in-service lessons.

2. Students whose teachers have seen the televised in-service lessons will benefit from the teacher training

[1] Dr. Serena Wade, Research Consultant for the project.

and will show greater progress toward speech correction than students whose teachers have not seen the televised in-service lessons.

Design and Procedure

Three groups of teachers and their classroom students participated in the evaluation. The teachers who viewed the TV lessons were employed by one district; teachers who did not view the TV series taught in a different district. The two participating districts were similar, but not identical. The "experimental" district was located in the greater San Jose urban area, while the "control" district encompassed primarily rural land with a small urban center. The proportion of Mexican-American residents in the experimental district is smaller than the corresponding proportion in the control district.

The teachers in the experimental district were divided into two viewing conditions. One group of teachers saw the series at the district headquarters and received post-lesson discussion leadership by a district staff member. A sub-hypothesis of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of extra motivation procedures on teacher learning and adoption of the classroom practices advocated by the series. The other viewing group saw the series either at home or at their individual schools, and there was no attempt to provide organized discussion after the lessons; some group exchange of ideas did take place among the teachers who viewed the series together. Teachers in the control district did not view the TV series.

The test for the first hypothesis (teacher learning) was an after-only design, comparing performance of the two teacher groups (viewers and non-viewers) on a written exam covering the TV series content. The second hypothesis was tested by a before-and-after design, measuring the changes in performance of students in the experimental and control teachers' classes on a standardized measure of speech development, the Arizona Articulation Proficiency Scale (AAPS). The student tests were administered immediately prior to the beginning of the TV series and were intended to be administered two weeks after the conclusion of the series, in order to provide some time for the participating teachers to implement advocated classroom practices. The design schematic appears below, with sample sizes shown before and after the series.

TABLE 1

EXPERIMENTAL SAMPLE SIZES BEFORE AND AFTER THE TV SERIES

	Discussion-Motivation		Individual Viewing		Control**	
	Before	After	Before	After	Before	After
Teachers	14	9*	12	7*	14	14
Students	46	27	37	24	42	23

*Only 14 teachers took the final examination for the series.

**Second, third, and fourth grade teachers from two schools in the control district.

The effects of attrition in both teacher and student samples will be discussed in the results section of this report. Such a decrease in sample sizes in work with minority populations is not uncommon and was further aggravated in this study by the persistence of the flu just prior to the week designated for post-testing.

The students were pretested the week of September 30, 1968. One lesson of the TV series was broadcast each week from October 7 through December 4. Teachers were tested immediately after the series. Student posttests were scheduled for the week of December 16, 1968, just before Christmas vacation.

Analysis

The independent variable in this evaluation was teacher viewing of the eight-lesson in-service TV series. The dependent variables were teacher performance on a written test covering the information in the series and student change scores on tests of spoken English. The test for the teachers was developed by Mr. Richard Leyva, consultant to the Santa Clara County Office of Education, and appears as an Appendix to this report.

The design, as originally conceived, calls for a simple ANOVA for both teacher and student performance. However, upon examination of the sample size and after calculation of differences between the two experimental groups, the analysis became a conventional t-test of the differences between experimental and control in teacher test scores, and a comparison of student gain scores between the two experimental groups only. Preliminary analysis showed no significant differences in teacher performance between the two experimental groups.

Unfortunately, no comparison was possible between the students in the experimental and control groups (although comparisons were legitimate between the two experimental groups) because a district administrative delay and high rates of absenteeism prevented the posttesting of the experimental and control students within the same period of time. Students in the control group were tested two weeks after the series was concluded; students in the experimental group were tested six weeks after the conclusion of the series, one full month after the control group.

Consequently, the two student groups are not strictly comparable, but their respective means and other descriptive data are reported below.

Results

The first hypothesis of the study was supported at a high degree of significance. Table 2 shows that the teachers in the experimental group (those who viewed the in-service TV series) scored significantly higher on the written test than did those teachers who did not view the series. Although this is an after-only comparison, there is no reason to believe that the teacher groups were not comparable in their knowledge of Mexican-American speech problems before the start of the TV series; both districts serve a sizable section of the Mexican-American community and the teachers deal with the speech problems constantly. The data indicate that the TV series was a significant asset to

the teachers in the experimental group and that they learned the material covered in the TV lessons well. The maximum score on the test was 54 points.

TABLE 2

TEACHER PERFORMANCE ON WRITTEN TEST

	MEAN	SUM SQUARES	N	p
Experimental-discussion	49.3	45.52	8	n.s.
Experimental-non-discussion	50.2	49.64	6	
Total Experimental	49.6	85.24	14	$<.001$
Control	32.7	388.86	14	

The sub-hypothesis regarding adoption of teaching practices was also supported, although no statistical manipulations were performed. The average number of lessons implemented by teachers in the viewing group with planned discussions was 5.4, with a mode of 8 (the total in the series). The other teachers, who viewed alone or in groups without discussion leadership, put an average of 4.8 lessons into practice with a modal implementation of 5 lessons. Table 2 shows no difference in teacher learning between the two experimental groups. When asked, on an evaluation questionnaire, teachers seemed to support the idea exchange made possible in the discussion groups.

The data on the students are inconclusive, from a statistical standpoint, but indicative of some problems in an experimental design that deals with two-step measurement of effects (from teacher-to-student). As mentioned before, no comparisons were made between the experimental and control students because of differences in posttest administration. However, a direct comparison of student performance in the two experimental groups was possible, and the data indicate no difference between the two groups. The reader will recall that there were no differences in teacher learning between these two experimental groups, but teachers who participated in discussions used more of the teaching methods advocated by the TV series. Table 3 reports the student results.

When the two experimental student groups were combined, their mean gain from pretest to posttest was 8.3 points on the AAPS. The mean gain from the control group was 9.3 points. While no legitimate comparison can be made directly, such a small difference, coupled with high variance--as in Table 3 below--makes a significant difference between experimental and control groups unlikely.

TABLE 3

COMPARISON OF APPS GAIN SCORES FOR
STUDENTS IN TWO EXPERIMENTAL GROUPS

	PRETEST MEAN	POSTTEST MEAN	MEAN GAIN	GAIN SUM SQUARES	N	p
Experimental - discussion	84.6	90.8	6.7	1943.73	27	<.10
Experimental - non-discussion	83.2	93.0	10.1	1927.49	24	
Control	77.0	86.3	9.3	1065.47	23	

Discussion

It is apparent that the TV series, SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS, is teaching teachers about pronunciation difficulties common to children of Mexican-American background. It is not clear that the teachers are using what they have learned in a fashion that is best suited to speed correction for their Mexican-American students. Our student results are inconclusive, but they do indicate that it may be wise to concentrate on select personnel for corrective assistance in speech. Teachers will find the information in the TV series of great assistance in "understanding" more about Mexican-American speech problems, but the identification and solution of specific student difficulties is perhaps best left to the therapist.

In the control district, for example, the posttest data indicated a gain in student speech development at least comparable with the gains made by experimental students at the same grade levels. The district has a group of knowledgeable therapists that were fully aware of the TV lesson contents. During the course of the experiment, all children with identified speech problems in both the experimental and control districts were given extra help by the district therapists. It is possible that such help, at least in the control districts, was sufficient to permit substantial gains on the test instrument used in the study. This is one possible explanation for the similarity of student results.

Another explanation lies in the self-selection of "better" students in the control district to remain in the study. While the overall student loss in the experiment was 41 per cent, a predictable rate of attrition in this type of sample, the students in the control group who remained were seven points higher on the pretest than those who moved out of the district or were absent at the posttest. Such differences were not obtained in the experimental groups, which also suffered comparable numbers of student losses.

Pretest scores for the three groups also show a ceiling effect on the amount of possible growth, operating in favor of the control group; the pretest mean of the control group was seven points lower than the pretest mean of the experimental groups combined, giving the control group more room for improvement.[1] However, the substantial variance associated with the student gain scores for all groups made significant differences very difficult to obtain for any comparisons.

Finally, it is doubtful that the short period of time allowed by the experiment for implementation of the recommended teaching practices permitted much opportunity for teachers to use the methods extensively in the classroom.[2] If better controls were instituted to account for other sources of potential speech assistance to the student, the role of the teacher in effecting changes in speech development for the Mexican-American child could be more thoroughly investigated. The in-service series broadcast to teachers in Santa Clara County most certainly provided much more information than had ever before been available in such a palatable form. Since the teachers learned from the programs and rated them very highly, it is likely that they will use the advocated teaching techniques as opportunities arise in the classroom, and that long-term student gains may be significant.

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Leonard Olguin has said, "I want you to teach these children to speak in such a way that, if you were to close your eyes, you would never know that they are brown." Let us hope that, before long, his goal will be realized.

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[1]There was also an absolute ceiling effect at work. During the pretesting, it became apparent that the passing criterion on the A.A.P.S., below which students were identified as having speech problems, had to be raised to 90 in a test of 100 points in order to obtain an adequate student sample for the study.

[2]Another complicating factor in this experiment was the small percentage of any class represented by the student sample. Each participating teacher had an average of three students with speech difficulties identified by the pretest in a class of approximately 30.

APPENDIX

TEST AND KEY

SOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATIONS

The following 60 statements are true or false. If you believe the statement to be true, write a T in the space preceding the item. If you believe the statement to be false, write an F in the space.

The formula (Score=Rights-Wrongs) will be used in scoring. Hence, it is recommended that you do not guess.

T 1. In Spanish there are five crisp clear vowel sounds. These vowel sounds are /i/, /e/, /a/, /o/, /u/. The mouth positions used while enunciating these vowels in Spanish are always the same.

F 2. Many words beginning with "s" in English are "s" plus consonant blends, all of which the Spanish hearer has had sufficient experience in hearing.

F 3. The voiceless /th/ is not difficult to teach because it calls for a low breath level.

T 4. A rule for pronouncing "s" in Spanish is as follows: No words end with a /z/ sound.

F 5. In English there are only five vowel sounds.

T 6. The Spanish mouth, in order to maintain clear speech, has had to make some "plan ahead" adjustments in its speaking habits.

T 7. As Spanish is spoken the flow of air used to produce sounds and words is very low. This sound producing habit causes enunciation problems for the Spanish language-oriented child in every English utterance he attempts.

F 8. The child who says "wumpaper" instead of "one paper" can be said to have a "lazy mouth."

T 9. Children cannot read symbols of sounds they cannot hear.

T 10. In Spanish "s" may be followed by five vowel sounds while in English "s" may be followed by many more vowel sounds.

T 11. Because there is no voiceless /th/ sound in Spanish (except in some regions of Spain), when the voiceless /th/ is used, the Spanish speaker will perceive either a t, an s, or an f in its place.

T 12. A rule for pronouncing "s" in Spanish is as follows: If the "s" is followed by a vowel or a voiceless consonant the "s" is then given a hissing double "s" sound.

T 13. The English language-oriented hearer feels that the Spanish language-oriented speaker of English speaks in a two note sing-song and always ends sentences on the higher of the two notes.

T 14. One of our biggest jobs is to teach the child to hear the "uh" sound: Practice with him until he never confuses "uh" with "ah".

F 15. Generally, the child with a Spanish language background will need to be taught to decrease the air supply and flow as he speaks English.

T 16. In Spanish the rate of speed in talking is accelerated because the Spanish speaker can only encounter ten different juncture points.

F 17. The "h" is silent in Spanish. However, the breathy "h" of English is exactly duplicated in the breathy "j" of Spanish.

T 18. There is a broad spread of abilities in a Spanish language-oriented child with respect to his ability to understand, speak, read and write Spanish in that precise order.

F 19. English is a three-tone language, while Spanish is a four-tone language.

T 20. Because there are many ways in which the schwa may be installed, the manner is secondary; the idea that the Spanish speaking child has no schwa is primary.

T 21. There is no /sh/ sound in Spanish.

F 22. In Spanish a "d" between vowels is produced as a voiceless /th/.

F 23. Listening to the model and recordings of words containing "uh's" will not particularly assist the child.

F 24. Teachers must bear in mind that above all they are working to replace Spanish with English.

T 25. The digraph "sh" represents a sound that does not exist in the Spanish sound system.

T 26. Regressive assimilation can be said to mean that the sound upcoming will have certain effects on a sound being said.

T 27. Some of the most difficult of the "thirty demons" are: b, m, p, k, g, d, t, v, ch, and j.

F 28. To teach a child the glide-off sounds that exist in English is a simple matter if you show that the following pairs are pronounced exactly the same in English as they are in Spanish: Sea = si and to = tu.

F 29. As Spanish is spoken, words are ended in at least forty possible ways.

T 30. The "English-eared" individual, upon hearing a /ch/ sound produced without the customary accompanying blast of air, perceives it as a /sh/ sound.

F 31. Vowel power can be defined as the effect two vowels will have on a third vowel that comes between them.

T 32. Most words that end with "n" in Spanish have that syllable stressed. This is not true in English.

F 33. Because many Spanish words end in the letter "b" it is a simple task to teach the child English words that end in "b".

F 34. In English, as in Spanish, there is both a voiced /th/ sound and the voiceless /th/ sound.

F 35. When the Spanish oriented child hears an English /j/ he often perceives it as a Spanish /h/.

F 36. The Spanish speaker does not have to be taught to place the "th" sound, that he is already able to make between vowels, at the beginning and ends of words.

T 37. Not all Spanish language-oriented children have problems with all the points of interference.

F 38. The Spanish speaking child has difficulty producing a /ch/ sound because this sound does not exist in the Spanish language.

T 39. Before /k/ sounds and hard /g/ sounds the /n/ sound becomes an /ng/ sound. That is, "un cojo" is said "ungcojo."

T 40. The sound system of Spanish interferes with the acquisition of English in precise ways, and these interferences cause problems of clear communication.

F 41. There are many more words beginning with "s" in Spanish than there are in English.

F 42. The most difficult part of the /ch/ sound is to produce the voiced quality of it.

F 43. The /s/ in the English word sea is the same as the "s sound" in the Spanish words "los nietos."

T 44. Teachers must learn to hear what the children are truly saying, and they should avoid supplying final sounds that the children are not actually saying.

F 45. In Spanish, words that begin with "s" are never followed by a vowel.

F 46. Words with voiced /th/ sounds between vowels present the greatest difficulty to the Spanish oriented ear. These are words such as mother, brother, and rather.

T 47. In speaking Spanish a rule for pronouncing an "s" is as follows: If the sound following an "s" is a voiced consonant, the "s" is then uttered as a /z/.

F 48. As Spanish is spoken, words are ended mainly in only five ways.

T 49. The Spanish language sound system has a voiced /th/ sound in it. This sound is attached to the letter "d" but only when it occurs between vowels.

T 50. Vowel power carries over into English causing the Spanish-oriented individual to say "the leether" instead of "the leader."

T 51. One of the basic tasks of the teacher is to teach each child how to increase the volume of air flow in all speech.

T 52. The English voiced /th/ sound is tied to the sounds of the Spanish "d." Consequently words like "these" and "those" will be perceived by the Spanish speaker as "dese" and "dose."

T 53. English and Spanish place the nouns and adjectives in opposite sequence.

T 54. The Spanish speaking child will produce an "s" in the word "skate" different from the "s" in the word "slide."

F 55. The voiceless /th/ is easier than some other sounds to teach because the Spanish speaker has an aural record for this sound.

T 56. The Spanish mode of producing the "s" sounds causes the following sort of problem: "President" is pronounced as "pressident."

F 57. In English the vowel sound which is used the most is the /oi/ which is called schwa.

T 58. One reason why the Spanish oriented child and the English oriented teacher are at odds is because one feels that he is producing a /sh/ sound properly, and the other can't understand why anyone would reverse /ch/ with /sh/.

F 59. The /zh/ sound of leisure and azure exists exactly as it does in standard Spanish.

F 60. Spanish is a four toned language while English is a three toned language.

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AVAILABILITY OF MATERIALS

KINESCOPES - A set of eight 16mm kinescopes may be purchased from the Santa Clara County Office of Education at $400.00 per set. Send purchase order to the attention of Shirley Nelson.

TV STUDY GUIDES - Study guides are available in quantities of 50 or more from the Santa Clara County Office of Education at 75¢ each, single copies at $1.00 each. Send purchase order to the attention of Elaine Martin.

VIDEO TAPES - For dubbing service from KTEH/Channel 54 2" quad masters, contact Acme Film Service, (212) 758-5100.

Of related interest:

Shuck Loves Chirley, by Leonard Olguin (textbook)
Published by Golden West Publishing House
PO Box 1222
Huntington Beach, California

Available at $3.95 per copy (plus sales tax, postage and handling).

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